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Our Friend, France

Lecture given at Harvard University
under the auspices of the Cercle Français

February 2, 1916

Lecture at the Harvard Club, Boston

February 1, 1916

By

WHITNEY WARREN

AM. Hon. Harvard 1913.

Membre de L'Institut de France

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OUR FRIEND, FRANCE

GENTLEMEN

In the face of the great conflict, which is devastating the Old Continent, the New World, is divided between the concern for its own happiness, and that of its honor, and hesitates to take its place openly by the side, of those who are defending Liberty and Justice. It is indeed a sad position that we have been made to take, in a dispute where we had, at the same time, a role so glorious and useful to fill. Those who have the responsibility of having forced us into such an attitude, are on the eve of rendering their accounts, and it is to be hoped that the People will judge them with severity. Obedient to their instincts, our People understand very well what is expected from us, in accordance with our History and Dignity. We have, in a general way, an exact appreciation of our duty, and this permits us to wait, in all confidence, THE DAY WHEN WE WILL SEE ONCE AGAIN, SHUT UP IN THEIR STUDIES, THOSE WHO HAVE BY AMBIGUOUS DISSERTATIONS, LED US FROM THE STRAIGHT PATH. I have, indeed, been able to convince myself since my return to the United States, that Opinion is healthy and far-seeing; but, I have also been able to see, that on certain points this Opinion, is not wisely informed, and it is on these points that I would like to speak to-day, so that you may also, if you agree with me, aid in dissipating several errors too evidently "Made in Germany."

The first of these errors, bear upon the role of France, in the actual war, and the second on the

role of Great Britain. They have been dressed up and masqueraded, both of them, by the German propaganda, which, having failed in its brutal action, hopes for better success through insinuation. Their manner of effecting public opinion is not dangerous, when it limits itself to criminal tactics, but it becomes so, when they advance seditious and false theories, apparently based upon facts, and against which the unwary are not warned.

Amongst these theories there is none more perfidious, than the one, which consists in wishing to convince, us Americans, that France is only engaged in this War through the bad luck of having had Allies. This is done by giving false reasoning as to the origin of the Conflict, in attributing it to the commercial rivalry between England and Germany. They are well aware, in Berlin, of the great moral influence that France enjoys all over the world, the great sympathy she has always aroused throughout her history, due to the generosity of her great principles and of her conduct. But more particularly, here she counts innumerable friends who are not prepared to neglect her. We owe to her a debt of recognition, so evident, that nobody could dream of the possibility of our forgetting it; it would be useless, and too clumsy, for Germany to attempt to convince us that France is our enemy; but, on the contrary—how easy it is to exploit our old discussion with England, and to use her as a scare-crow. The German tactics are none other than this.

If it were possible to establish, that the object of this formidable War, is the supremacy of the

World by Great Britain and, if it were possible, to reduce the role of France to that of an accomplice, a double result might be hoped for:—First, to re-awaken the souvenir of our old quarrels with one of these powers, and secondly, to weaken the motives we might have to uphold the other; to awaken an old suspicion and to put asleep an old friendship, by blarney-ing us on the origin, as well as consequences of the struggle; TO SUBSTITUTE FOR THE REMORSE WE MIGHT FEEL, FOR ABANDONING AN OLD FRIEND, THE EXCUSE OF A LEGITIMATE FEAR AGAINST AN OLD ENEMY.

But this is a speculation with which we must not allow ourselves to be duped—to so much cunning we must oppose even more. NO! This war was not declared because the docks of London were jealous of the docks of Hamburg. It has been established beyond controversy that Germany alone has taken the fearful responsibility of starting the War and that for a long time she has premeditated her attack. England had no other ambition than to develop her power through peace. Her absolute lack of military preparation at the beginning of the hostilities is an irrefutable proof. It is, therefore, a simple lie to say that she has ever dreamed of conquering by her arms a dangerous competitor. It is even not true that Germany had, in the first instance, the intention of the immediate ruin of her great rival; it was not against England that she had the intention of mobilizing.

Read for yourselves, the official report of the diplomatic interviews, which preceded the rupture. You will see that up to the last moment,

Germany attempted by all means in her power, by all sorts of disloyal propositions, to insure the neutrality of England. Undoubtedly, it was not in the spirit of gentleness, that she tried thus to keep up the good relations, between the two countries! She felt that she was not strong enough, to take on so much of the world at the same moment, and she was reserving for the future, (after a complete victory over her Continental neighbors) the chance of in turn destroying her great maritime rival. Her politicians foresaw two distinct wars—one leading to the absolute defeat of France, and of Russia, not counting Belgium and Servia, and later—in her turn—England, when she found herself isolated.

This division of effort appeared to her more handy, and, as a matter of fact, it was the only way, in which she could hope to achieve her supreme supremacy.

Her plan, too cunning, did not work out; but, none the less, in the actual struggle, FRANCE, HAS THE RIGHT, AND DEMANDS IT, OF BEING CONSIDERED THE INITIAL, THE PRINCIPAL ADVERSARY, AND WITH HER, HER ALLY—RUSSIA. IT IS ENGLAND WHO ENTERED INTO THE GAME BY CHANCE, OR RATHER, OUT OF RESPECT FOR HUMANITY, AND BY AN EXACT UNDERSTANDING, OF WHAT HER INTEREST WAS. The violation of Belgian territory made her interpret, what is known as the "Entente Cordiale," in its largest sense, and give to it the character of a true Alliance. She immediately took sides with the enemies of Violence and of Perjury, to save her honor, and also (why hesi-

tate to say it?) to preserve her force. These are two motives, of which she may well be proud, and which unite themselves in one; because, it proves **THAT THERE ARE NATIONS, WHICH STILL ESTEEM, THAT HONOR INTACT IS AN ESSENTIAL CONDITION OF POWER.**

Therefore, do not let us take as truth, all that it appears wise to Germany to let us know. Do not let us accept, without discussion, the false reasonings which she advances. The real object, the real cause of the present war, is much nobler than she would have us believe, and **FRANCE**, is the flag around which have rallied all the people who still count Dignity and Freedom for something. Do not let us say—"What a pity for France that she has embarked on this enterprise!" But, let us say—"What a glory for her, to be at the head of all **FREE Nations!**" **AND LET US CONSIDER, THAT THE TRIUMPH OF THE ALLIES WILL BE, ABOVE ALL, THE TRIUMPH OF THE GREAT PRINCIPLES WHICH FRANCE HAS ALWAYS DEFENDED, AND WHICH ARE THE VERY CONDITIONS OF OUR OWN EXISTENCE—THE VERY CHARTER OF OUR OWN CONSTITUTION.** All other considerations may be forgotten but these. Do not let us permit that the veritable cause be diminished. Do not let us be uneasy, if, in giving our help to the cause of the Allies, we are playing the game of such and such a power. Let us persuade ourselves simply, that there are general doctrines, universal doctrines, that surpass all individual ones, and which **FRANCE** symbolizes. She would aggrandize those who fight beside her, if they need aggrandizement. She diminishes those who fight

against her, OR WHO, EVEN BY THEIR INDIFFERENCE AND INERTIA, DO NOT SUS-TAIN HER.

The quadruple Alliance is made up of all sorts of races—Latins, Anglo Saxons, and Slavs; and all sorts of Governments—Republican, Constitutional, Monarchial, and Autocratic.

The common necessity, to reduce a cynical and aggressive power, has re-united them. A common instinct for preservation, has made them Allies; forgetting their difference of character, and the difference of their mode of ruling, they find themselves side by side, to fight against the revolting principles, the monstrous pretensions of barbaric Germany. This offers to the most different elements of opinion, an occasion of fraternizing under the name of the Ideal for, the defense of Humanity. The Czar of all the Russians, does not speak to his people, in another language than the President of the Republic, speaks to the citizens of France. They invoke, both of them, Liberty and Right, to prove the necessity of a struggle to the bitter end. They, both of them, appeal to the everlasting aspirations of Conscience, because, it is in all verity, *that* which is the price at stake. All the rest is of no importance. Who would have said, a short time ago, that to-day we would see Russia and England, (whose ambitions in several points of the globe are very much opposed), giving each other the hand to aid in the common cause, and forgetting their private quarrels? To obtain such a result something greater than mere personal reasons, must have sprung up—something stronger than the rancour or the suspicion, analgous to

that which certain Americans seem still to harbor against Great Britain. THIS SOMETHING, IS NOTHING BUT THE WILL TO MAKE RESPECTED THE GREAT LAWS OF HUMANITY.

Are we not going to show ourselves capable of conquering our personal dislikes, no matter what they are, and to understand, that there is something greater and more universal that should interest us? Are we not going to abandon our egotistical aversions and allow ourselves, with our whole soul, to practice a more generous and universal sympathy? The end that Germany has in view, is to profit by our animosity against either one or the other of the Allies. She excites against England those who, without reasoning, dislike her. She excites the Jews, against Russia. For, let it be remembered, it is the German Jew who in this country are continually exciting opinion against Russia—not the Russian Jew. She calls to her aid all we have within us that is most vulgar, and that which is the lowest, for she attempts to exploit our Hatred. One discovers there the work of a low and vile nature; but, we will escape from her iniquitous suggestions—for, we know that the only nobility consists in searching and working for reasons of Love and of Friendship; and it is certainly not Germany which furnishes us with these.

FRANCE personifies, in this War, the ideas which have assembled the nations solicitous of Justice. She is the *dominant Living Thought*, as expressed by the Allies. She plays outside of her military role,—a role no less important—that of “ANIMATRICE,” as would say, the poet

d'Annunzio — and, is there any comparable to it? I fail to see it and do not believe it, because, without it no other can exist. The great drama which is being played at this moment would have no reason for being, if FRANCE and all that she represented at the beginning, did not give it one! All the other personages of the play are living her moral life; and, it is for that reason, they have the right of receiving from us an equal admiration. If, in ordinary times, you do not feel a strong affinity toward England or toward Russia to-day love them *because of their resemblance to France*. When people come and say to you:— “But it is Germany and England who are really at war to-day and we do not desire the victory of either one or the other!” let us answer “NO! IT IS BARBARISM AND CIVILIZATION, AND BOTH, THROUGHOUT HISTORY, HAVE ACQUIRED OTHER NAMES. THE FIRST IS GERMANY, IT IS TRUE; BUT, THE SECOND IS FRANCE.”

Therefore, my young friends, do not forget to protest every time that people attempt to confuse you on the true object of this vast conflagration. You are the Intelligence and the Future of this country. YOU WILL DIRECT, ONE DAY, ITS DESTINIES. MAKE THE EFFORT NOW SO THAT THEY MAY NOT BE LEFT TO YOU IN A RATHER SAD AND DAMAGED STATE. You have the right to talk and to protest; and believe me, that, at the present moment, your heritage is being neglected. They are diminishing it morally, in trying to mislead the United States as to the true significance of this war, and, to confine us to a passive role, under the pretext that we have no interest to serve in assisting a British victory.

A moment ago I spoke of Love and of Friendship. It was of you I was thinking when I pronounced those words. You are of the age, when these sentiments fill the heart, and when they are capable of performing miracles. You have fervor and enthusiasm! Use them to their utmost, to render more real still, the natural inclination we have in America to lean toward FRANCE. This inclination, I know, is not absolutely inert. It has manifested itself by all sorts of individual initiatives, generous and touching, but it is still a long way from giving what we have the right to expect of it. What more noble purpose can be made of your youthful ardour, than by all the means possible, by speech, and by charity, by your every day thought and actions, to support a country which is truly yours, since it paid with its blood, the liberty of your ancestors. Turn your eyes from everything that is not AMERICA, that is to say, from everything that is not FRANCE!

Many of your elders, it is only just to say, are paying their debt; have gone without hesitating to offer their services to General Joffre, as in by-gone times LaFayette did in offering his arms to General Washington. We are living in a time, it is true, when one is not named a Major General in his twentieth year, as was LaFayette. Those who have gone over there are simply soldiers, aviators, ambulance attendants; some of them have a grade—one that does not give them command of a division; but, let us remember that merit, is not measured by the number of stripes upon the sleeve. I am not asking you to imitate them, but here, at home, to propogate the belief in the French. Since you have the luck to belong to a

country that has a debt of gratitude to pay, (I say luck, because it *is* luck, for a people with proper instincts to have moral obligations), apply yourselves to paying it. There can be no better task for your hearts. Gratitude permits you to find immediately where to place your sentimental resources—what might be called your sentimental assets. Convert these into bonds of Friendship! You have a wonderful role to play—that of recalling to those who are apt to forget, that FRANCE is at this moment fighting for YOUR FUTURE HAPPINESS; that she defends YOUR HOMES, at the same time she defends her own; that YOUR BROTHERS—young fellows of your own age, are falling over there on the battlefield, SO THAT CIVILIZATION MAY NOT PERISH, AND THAT YOU MAY STILL BENEFIT BY ITS GIFTS.

At Paris, in the School of Fine Arts, to which I am particularly attached, on the first day of mobilization, out of 1800 students, 1600 left for first line defence.

Can you imagine a similar spectacle taking place here, at Harvard? That is to say, that out of your number, which, roughly speaking, is 7000, 6400 should to-morrow abandon their studies to offer themselves to Death in the defense of your ideals? Can you imagine your classes absolutely deserted—this great house, sad and silent—the intellectual life suspended—your work left unfinished—your ambitions changed—AND YOURSELVES, SETTLED IN THE TRENCHES, YEARNING AND STRAINING FOR NATIONAL VICTORY!

That, perhaps, is what might happen some day,

if your comrades, in France, were not at the present moment in charge of disputing the devouring pretensions of Germany! And seeing clearly the dangers, from which, through their struggle, they are saving you—your duty, pushes you to uphold their cause, to encourage them by your active approbation, and to testify to them on all occasions your solidarity. These students of all schools, who have furnished to the Republic of France her most brilliant officers, certainly, when the hour rings you will be their equals in courage! Therefore, show to them to-day, that their Moral qualities, are the same as yours; that you are their Peers, not only in Intelligence but through your Conscience!

I see for you a sort of command to take—even in peace—and that is, to direct the thoughts of those who surround you, of your families, of your friends, toward FRANCE who is struggling and who is suffering. Get together all the energy that can be useful to her. Beat the Reveille! so that no goodwill may be distracted from the straight path. Make yourselves masters of all hesitations by preaching, as I am doing, that the future victory is going to be FRANCE, that of her principles, and of her traditions. If you meet people who have a grudge against England—some vindictive Irishman, for example—say to them—“Do you not see that you are entering the service and aiding Germany? If your grievances are justifiable, it is with the indefatigable defenders of Justice, that you must be—that is to say, with FRANCE!” If you find Jews, who are hostile to Russia, say to them—“Beware of so-called German-American financiers and their satellites who are misleading

you. Which are the nations which have received you without any conditions—FRANCE and ENGLAND. Germany, before the war, forbade you the access to any career. Are you going to thank her for this humiliation by lending her a hand? If you have wrongs and demand justice you must turn to the two great people of the Earth who have for centuries been the champions of your liberties. They have been your help. Are you going to say they are wrong?" In truth, therefore, I repeat, there is for you, a great work of Love and Friendship to accomplish. I ask you to sow words of union and of fraternity, and I have fathomless confidence in your youthful generosity, in your enthusiasm, in your great power of persuasion.

This is not all, as I have said in the beginning I want to put you on guard against two lies. We have considered the first, which consisted in denaturalizing the true interests which are at stake in this struggle. The second is not less flagrant. It is that which consists of proving that England is powerless and that her capacity, as a whole, is negligible. In other words, Germany wishes to show on one side that England is possessed of an unhealthy ambition, and on the other side, that she is absolutely unfit for her task, and so, Germany hopes to expose her rival, at the same time, to a spirit of hatred, and to a spirit of disdain. For France, her attitude is quite the contrary. Germany, (knowing that she cannot make France an object of terror, nor an object of sarcasm), attempts to transform her into an humble, a pitiful country. One way or the other, she tries to create in us sentiments which obstruct our frank ardor in her cause.

Just as France has the right, NOT to the compassion which is destined to the feeble, but to the firm respect, which a great power deserves when she is in the right, so ENGLAND merits NOT irony, but admiration!

ENGLAND, it should be proclaimed, has realized in the space of eighteen months a formidable work, not only so far as the seas are concerned, but also for Continental defense; but, it must be remembered, that this work has not in a general way been manifested by destructive results, and it is for this very reason, that her efficiency may be contested.

Up to the present moment, the English effort has been signalized by daily victory—but by a negative victory—if I may use the expression,—not a destructive one. This victory, is over the German fleet on the one hand, and her extreme preparation on the other—which has not its example in the history of the World. The English fleet has not destroyed, (and for just reasons, as you know), the naval forces of Germany; but she has forbidden them to leave their refuge, either for combat or for commercial purposes. There has not been, with but one exception, since almost the beginning of the War, a single frigate, or a single merchant ship, sailing under the German flag. I omit speaking of submarines—instruments, (as they have been used), of most miserable and foul murder; and, even they have not succeeded, in the smallest way, in beginning to equalize the power of the two fleets, or in any way to obstruct the commercial traffic between the allied nations, AND OURSELVES, IT MIGHT BE ADDED. They have absolutely

failed in the work they were destined to accomplish, and have only succeeded in striking popular imagination in a miserable fashion.

It is difficult for one to size up, in all its significance, a superiority which forbids the Central Empires, the access of ALL the Oceans, which blockades them, which deprives them of the air to breathe, which in the end must become vital. We Americans, do we understand sufficiently the daily service which this mastery of the seas renders us? Without it our commerce would be stopped, our prosperity diminished instead of increased. We would be at the mercy of Germany and of her criminal fantasies. The important results? No! It is not Germany who has obtained it through her noisy, shameful and miserable campaign; but ENGLAND, WHO HAS VIRTUALLY DEMOLISHED IN THEIR OWN PORTS THE GERMAN COLORS, AND FORBIDDEN THEM TO FLY ON THE OPEN SEAS!

And on the land? England, after having brilliantly aided, in pushing back the first shock, has taken up the task of forming armies and chiefs. This task was one, so formidable, that it could not, indeed, be accomplished in a day; but it is a remarkable thing, prodigious even,—the spectacle of a people, who, all of a sudden, had to break with its secular traditions to follow a new destiny.

England gives to us this example—an example, which one of these days we will probably have to follow, and let us only hope, when that day comes, we may do as well as she has done. We have the opportunity of comparing our situation

of to-day with hers of yesterday. A people of sailors, habituated—as ourselves—to consider their geographical position impregnable; a position which necessitated an organization on water for national defense; in one day they found themselves called upon, from considering themselves an insular power to consider themselves a continental one.

A doctrine of magnificent loneliness, had brought them to feel, (even as the Monroe Doctrine has with us), an absolute indifference toward militarism, and had inspired them with a feeling of security, illusionary and dangerous.

One must be careful of doctrines that flatter LAZINESS AND VANITY, also of those that have the ambition to be PERPETUAL.

All that is eternal and regular, can be found in the great moral laws; but, political principles, which depend upon the particular and momentary consideration of each state, cannot hope to be everlasting truths, because, they are subject to evolution and to changing conditions. That which was our strength yesterday, may become our weakness to-morrow! Monroe, himself, would probably be the adversary to-day of his much vaunted doctrine. His clear sight of the epoch in which he lived, does not permit us to believe that he would have adopted, in our days, a blind line of action. The great lines of our international policy were not drawn by him to be perpetuated into infinity! His work was the practical reasoning of the day; but, certainly, he would not have wanted it to be applied against good common sense, *against our honor and against our interest.* THE RULE HE LAY DOWN WAS DESTINED

TO SERVE OUR GREATNESS; BUT, IT IS INVOKED TO-DAY, WITHOUT PAYING ANY ATTENTION TO WHAT NECESSITY CALLS FOR, AND SIMPLY, BECAUSE IT IS HANDY.

And so, the English abused a rule which was no longer adaptable to reality, but which merely permitted them to exist, with the least possible effort. Brutally, they have obliged themselves to change their ideas, and they have immediately given proof of the energy, which one would like to see practiced here, before the hour of peril is sounded. Their expeditionary forces, which amounted to 100,000 men the day before the war has been transformed in fourteen months, and by voluntary consent of individuals, into an army of 4,000,000 men. 4,000,000 men are to-day on the English front, or ready to be sent there—and the whole country is mobilized in its entirety, for the needs of this vast force.

The daily and persevering education, that it was necessary to undertake, in order to make plain to each Englishman, the error of his supposed traditional geographical privileges, we, still have the time to accomplish, methodically and in cold blood, instead of resorting to a great unstudied effort, which is always perilous.

BUT, LET US REMEMBER THERE IS NOT ONE MOMENT TO LOSE, FOR, AS IT IS, WE HAVE ALREADY LOST EIGHTEEN MONTHS.

We find ourselves, as did England, in the position of an individual who has a vocation, but who, in order to insure his existence has got to learn a trade. Dilettanteism to-day is not sufficient. We

must have trained officers—soldiers can be found—but officers, it takes years to form, and not a few weeks, as in our present pretension. The effort I am asking for, will not be arrived at without discussion, but *who* would, as a Chief of State wait another moment before making it. The feeling of the risk that our country is running should forbid us to delay one day the moment of acting. England and France also have repaired their errors; but, think of what would have been their supremacy, if, instead of having improvised, they had prepared! Let us open our ears, as our old friends on the other side of the Ocean have done, to the voices that show us the dangers we are running, and let us profit by our good luck to be able to prepare without precipitation, but with a studied rapidity.

All that can be a reproach to England is her thoughtlessness in time of peace; but, are we qualified to make that reproach? At the present moment she understands, she has studied the question and has attacked it. BY ALL THAT SHE HAS DONE, AND BY ALL THAT SHE IS GOING TO DO, SHE IS, IN THE ACTUAL STRUGGLE, THE SUREST ELEMENT OF FINAL SUCCESS. Remember what Mr. Asquith said in conclusion in one of his last speeches in Parliament—"This war, is a mathematical war, of organization and endurance, the victory will lean to the side which has the best army, and which will be able to hold out the longest, and it is just that which we have the intention of doing."

ENGLAND, of all the belligerents, has the greatest reserves, she has the most material resources, her industrial and economical possibilities are

almost unlimited. The longer the fight goes on, the more the weight of her alliance will be felt, in the balance of the opposing forces. She carries with her innumerable hopes, and it is perhaps for that reason that her advance is slow and that she moves with the dignity and pomp of a great cortege.

AGAIN LET US COPY AND NOT BELITTLE HER, AND DO NOT LET US LOSE THE ADVANTAGE WE HAVE OF BEING ABLE TO PREPARE OURSELVES WITHOUT HASTE.

The feebleness of our military policy comes naturally from the guilty conception of our government in relation to exterior problems, or better still, as regards questions of humanity. If, from the first day of the war, our masters, had felt that the enemies of Right and Liberty were ours, we would have commenced our preparation eighteen months back; but, by deceiving us as to our duty toward others, they have succeeded in blinding us as to our duty toward ourselves; THEY HAVE ENDEAVORED TO OPPOSE OUR HONOR TO OUR INTERESTS, WHEN, IN REALITY, THEY ARE INSEPARABLE, AS ALWAYS. Our HONOR called upon us to speak out, to condemn those who were acting against the great cause of civilization—our INTEREST, was to seize the occasion and to put ourselves on guard against them. The game of the government has consisted, in always showing itself complacent toward those who they thought to be the strongest, as if we implored the protection of this force, as if we did not know, that it has but one aim, that is tyranny, and

oppression. It is at least undignified and unbecoming for a great nation like ours to play at such a game. Sooner or later, too much cleverness on our part will turn out to be stupidity, for Germany is destined to defeat, and so, the calculations of our politicians will be worsted and we will have compromised, at the same time, our intelligence and our good renown. The Policy to be following at this time, as always is that of HONESTY!

I said a moment ago that a statesman should modify and mould his conduct according to events; but I did not mean that he should act like a trimmer, or a weather cock, turning to every breeze. The events to which I refer are those which show, where stand the Honor, and the Strength of a Nation, for the crimes of Germany show clearly that it is impossible to give her full swing without being besmirched and dishonored. Her devouring ambition, her brutal methods of intimidation, attest, that in wishing to live at peace with her one may be courting death.

We have, we Americans, two enemies—one outside, one inside—Germany and our political Policy. Germany because she represents a perpetual menace to all FREE people, through her traditions, which are the opposite of all we stand for, of all our fathers fought for—our political Policy, because it has not the courage to make us respected, nor to protect us from future danger. Every day, we are further exposed to consideration and ridicule, awaiting calmly and stupidly the day, when our turn will come of being the victim of aggression.

I am no more than you are the dupe of diplomatic incidents which are regulated, so it is said, by victories, followed, however, every time, by further Forfeits and further Humiliation, and the price of this Humiliation is the German vote, which is in the hand of Mr. von Bernstorff. I have not as a principle to hide myself behind, false appearances that permit me to cloak my real feelings, to fool my conscience, and to avoid responsibilities. In this hour, which is as important for the neutrals as for the belligerents, we have need of a CHIEF, a LEADER, not of a mere spokesman, who negotiates our capitulation at the price of our shame. Our Force and our Virtues, must come out of this war enforced, not weakened, dead perhaps.

The position of neutrality, is one of those, which can be misunderstood and abused most easily. At first glance, it would seem that the neutrality, which leads to absolute inaction, is an ideal one. "You are fighting, I look on." But this point of view is absolutely wrong, if one goes to the bottom of things; even if we found ourselves before a people who respect our neutrality, which is not the case, the way in which we looked upon it would not be equitable.

A neutral people, is a people who do not favor either one or the other of the belligerents. It is unquestionable that we have favored Germany's game by allowing her, without protest by us in the commencement, to commit crime after crime, and by furnishing her thus, a tacit help. In fact, we had thrown off our neutrality the day we permitted, without lifting our voices, the violation of Belgian territory. There is silence which equals

assent. We have furnished to Germany the aid of our complicity, and this aid is considerable. Nobody can tell what effect, at that moment, our firm protestation would have had on the neutrals of Europe, who were too weak and in too dangerous a position to take the initiative of a formal disapproval.

So, since August 4, 1914, any true neutrality on our part has ceased and we have been forced, unconsciously, to take the side of the disloyal belligerent. We have been punished, because we have acquired the discredit of the entire civilized world, and the disloyalty which we protected has turned against us.

Can the Administration, which is continually confining itself within the limits of jurisprudence, tell me if there exists any text which authorizes the signer of an International Convention to demand reparation for an outraged right on the Sea more than on the Land? Are the crimes against the Lusitania, the Ancona, the Persia, less culpable than the violation of Luxemborg? Certainly not!

Therefore, in the name of what principle do we protest, even feebly, in the first case and not in the second? Probably because American citizens are involved; but, can we claim for the application of the rule in OUR favor when we have not claimed it in favor of the others? We have allowed to be established a precedent which in good jurisprudence forbids us to recriminate and leaves to Germany the liberty of doing as she pleases. OUR DIPLOMATIC GASPS WILL ONLY BECOME EFFECTIVE AND LEGITIMATE THE DAY, WHEN GOING BACK TO

THE PAST, WE HAVE CONDEMNED IN
BLOCK THE TEUTONIC INFRACTIONS
AGAINST ALL THE LAWS OF HUMANITY.

This is a second way of understanding neutrality. It is, following my ideas and following also yours, I will wager, the only one which is defensible. We then become the impartial observer who does not deceive himself with personal sympathy, nor attempt to gain the indulgence of those he believes to be the strongest. We place ourselves strongly upon the ground of the code, and we judge impartially, each blow given by each of the adversaries. We favor neither one nor the other. We simply mean to see that the rules of the game are followed out. Our role is as simple as this. We do not pretend to play any other, and nobody is asking us to do so. Only, let us remember that sometimes in a duel the second exposes himself to receive a lost ball or a stray thrust, and so, let us prepare to ward it off. We have already received several nasty ones. We do not want war with Germany, but she, in her fury, will throw us a defiance, throws it even daily, and the longer we allow her to believe in our weakness, the more she will show herself disdainful and aggressive.

Every time a vessel is blown up and American lives are sacrificed to German cowardice, we send to Berlin or Vienna a note which speaks of the Rights of Neutrals. When will somebody send to us a note which will tell of the Duties of Neutrals?

It is an elementary notion of philosophy that every Right calls for a corresponding Obligation. What Duty have we corresponding to the Rights which we have been claiming uselessly since many months? That of observing the obligations which

have been imposed upon us, by our very great part, as spectators, that is to say, to keep out of the fight only when this fight follows rules laid down by International Law. But supposing those rules are no more respected, our duty urges us then to act, our very duty as neutrals. If not where can we look for any righteousness in our vindication? The clauses concerning us have no more value than those concerning the belligerents in their mutual relations. IF WE PERMIT ONLY ONE ATTEMPT AGAINST THE LAW OF WAR, IT IS THE WHOLE OF THE LAW WHICH IS INVOLVED.

So, I say that if we wish with any authority to insist upon our Rights, we must previously fulfil our Duties. I expressly remain on the ground of jurisprudence in order to take the same point of view as our Masters who confine themselves to it. I neglect willingly, for the while, any question of sentiment or interest. Our Rights are strongly bound to those of the belligerents; they form a chapter of the common law and OUR DUTY TOWARD OURSELVES IS TO SEE THAT THIS LAW IS RESPECTED, JUST AS THE BELLIGERENTS' DUTY IS TO RESPECT IT, and I believe that now, after seventeen months of war facts have sufficiently settled on which side stand those who respect their oath.

In his last message to Congress, the President has treated in a similar way the active friends of Germany and those of the Allies. He has involved in the same disapproval in the same scorn, every American living here or residing abroad, "who though born and bred in the United States and calling themselves Americans have so far forgot-

ten themselves and their Honor as American citizens as to put their passionate sympathy with one or the other side of the great European conflict, above the regard for the Peace and Dignity of the United States." It sits well upon the President to speak of Honour, Peace and Dignity after eighteen months of humiliating apathy, with which he has even succeeded, alas, in permeating a great portion of our citizens who in their hearts know better. Why does he not speak about those Americans who have put their Indifference to the service of Germany. DO YOU FEEL STRONG ENOUGH TO MAKE RESPECTED YOUR RIGHTS OF NEUTRALS THAT YOU DO NOT THINK IT WORTH WHILE TO UPHOLD THOSE WHO ARE FIGHTING TO SAFEGUARD THEM? Your desire for Peace, which is so dear to you, which is so dear to all of us, it is France and her Allies who defend it, and I am more Neutral than you are, when I chose to be with those who fight for justice because I know my Neutrality rests alone on justice.

I have committed the crime, I confess it, of having gone to France at the beginning of the War and living there for sixteen months. At least I have been able to enlighten myself and to constat with my eyes where the enemies of Right were to be found. I have had indisputable proof of the German atrocities! I can swear that they have never hesitated before any crime, in order to obtain through TERROR the victory they were unable to win by legitimate success of their arms. The assassination of prisoners and of wounded, the destruction by fire, pillage, the use of forbidden projectiles, employment of fiery liquids and

asphyxiating gases, the bombardment of open towns, the Zeppelin and aeroplane raids against civil populations. I can guarantee to you that all this is true. I have witnessed many of them, or else I have had in my hands documents which established the truth of my assertions in an absolute manner.

But now, amongst all the sufferings I have seen, none have appealed to me so much as those of things—the martyrdom of mutilated cities, the decapitation of cathedrals, the assassination of architecture. The chapter of the crimes committed by the Germans against the Stones should remain an imperishable monument to their barbarism. It is for this reason I have said that the cathedral of Rheims should not be restored nor any of the other monuments of the past against which the Germans have vented their rage and impotency. Repair them, yes, permit their wounds to heal, but never attempt to restore them in their integrity. They should no more be touched than should the Parthenon, because, that which is lacking to them, their lost members and their tortured limbs, should remain as an eternal proof that the cause of France was right. All that I saw, all that I was able to confirm during my trips to the front proves that the Germans are possessed of an unhealthy desire for destruction. Rheims, Arras, Ypres, Soisson, and many other towns and innumerable villages have been victims of these profanations, which have no excuse from the point of view of military necessity. See for yourselves the work of these Vandals.

* * * * *

After this let the German Intellectuals establish by pompous manifestos that it is not true that they make war against the Laws and Rights of Men. One can always, by quibbling and by using cleverly turned language, appear to turn wrong into right; but the deeds are there. You have seen them. They are, indeed, eloquent. The Neutrality of Belgium violated, the attacks on the lives and belongings of citizens, the destruction of churches and works of art. May it not displease Wilhelm von Bode, Director-General of the Royal Museum of Berlin, that unprincipled fakir and presumptuous pedant, that head of a band who was one of the first to place his signature at the bottom of the famous manifesto of the German intellectuals; *none of these crimes can find their justification in military necessity*—they are the result of an education of which the object is to place the development of force above that of everything else—force is perhaps too feeble a word to express what I wish to say, because true force is that which is employed to do good. VULGAR BRUTALITY is perhaps a more fitting expression. When a nation or an individual is naturally thick-headed, they remain so throughout all their enterprises. You may say to me that there is no gentle way of making war. I concede this, but even under the most desperate circumstances, there does exist a decency, which has been laid down by convention, and which the Allies, and I might say, OURSELVES, certainly would not have transgressed, had luck conducted us first into an enemies country.

Before finishing this lecture, I want to say to you that Germany not only has no scruples in the

way she conducts war, but none in the peace which she imposes. If, unhappily, one is more feeble than she is, she adds the crime of robbery to that of assassination—from Denmark she has robbed Slesvig-Holstein; From France she has robbed Alsace and Lorraine; she has plundered Poland. Her ally, Austria, “her brilliant second” “she, whose soul is the sister of her own,” has robbed the Bosnians, Herzegovnia, The Trent. The Central Empires have established their power through brigandage. To explain to you what I mean, I would choose the typical case of Alsace and Lorraine. The problem in itself is not as familiar as it should be in this country. Many regard it with indifference; others find for it all sorts of fantastical solutions. It is sufficient in order to consider it from the point of view of equity, to admit, that the only just solution is that which France has dreamed of for forty years, and which is about to become a reality, for, Alsace and Lorraine, are *by nature*, French. The very point of view which I will consider is that of NATURE, that is, Geographically and Sentimentally. History, often infuses artificial arguments, because history, is the work of man. Alsace and Lorraine have changed hands so often, that their cause would never be terminated, if France and Germany confined their rights of proprietorship upon historical facts, which, after all, are only secondary, because they have not a permanent character. Eternal are those only which are founded essentially upon nature.

Let us therefore consider a map, and the inward feeling of the population, their HEARTS, to form an impartial, and neutral, judgment.

You will see that the Rhine flows between two ranges of mountains, on the one side the Vosges, on the other the Black Forest. The Rhine evenly divides the territory between these two ranges and this draws a line of natural equilibrium between France and Germany. As a matter of fact, if either one of the powers steps over it, the advantage she acquires is incontestible. If Germany advances to the Vosges, for example, her zone of attack, or of protection is increased just so much. She acquires three lines of defense—the Vosges, the Rhine and the Black Forest, and France has but one that of the Vosges. In order that justice may be satisfied each one of the neighbors should be guarded by the same lines of defense—France, the Vosges, and Alsace-Lorraine by the left bank of the Rhine—Germany, by the Black Forest, the Duchy of Baden, by the right bank of the Rhine. In other words, let us imagine the field between the Vosges and the Black Forest as an enormous tennis court, with the Rhine figuring as the net; each of the players is standing in his court awaiting the balls, but the game becomes absolutely unplayable if one of the players proceeds to suppress the net, and reserves for himself the right to play in the adversary's court.

It is not difficult to understand why Germany searches always to encroach on the frontier of her neighbors in spite of that which is just. It is her ambitious, aggressive policy. She never thinks of anything but attacking, and her desire is to destroy all objects which may frustrate her designs. Indeed, have not the Pan-Germanists been talking this long time of taking the Vosges, even

as they took the Rhine? If this kind of thing should go on France would indeed be reduced to absolute powerlessness; but she refuses to be at the mercy of the Barbarian—not only is she going to keep the Vosges, but she is going to advance her line to the Rhine, thus establishing the *equity* between Germany and herself and re-acquiring Alsace and Lorraine, which belong to her by all geographical laws. The Rhine divides Germany from France even as it did in the time of Caesar, and just as the Pyrenees divide France from Spain; the Alps, France from Switzerland and Italy and the Channel, France from England. For Germany to have a foot hold on the left bank of the Rhine is as impossible for the equilibrium of Europe as to imagine her with one in England, at Dover, for example.

To this I will now add the sentimental reasons—The Alsations and the Lorrainians are at Heart French. A plebecite would prove it, if under present conditions a plebecite were possible, which is not the case. After the treaty of Frankfort in 1871, Germany gave the inhabitants of the acquired provinces the choice of remaining in their little countries and becoming German citizens or else to leave them and remain French. Great numbers sadly accepted this last proposition and would not, of course, have the right to vote to-day. Others remained attached to the native soil in spite of the new naturalization which was imposed, and they conquered their repugnance in order not to desert their village. In a plebecite, it is true, they might vote; but their voices would be suffocated by those emigrants, that Germany poured into the provinces, as soon as the peace of '71 was

signed. She has, therefore, peopled them with her colonists, and the result of any referendum at the present moment would be a simple dupery! It was in '71 that a referendum would have been just; but at that moment Germany opposed it as she opposes everything which is just. To-day the real native population would have no chance of constituting a majority of those voting, but, none the less, their sentiments are not and never have been disputable. For forty-four years they have submitted to the tyrannical yoke of the invader, but she has never won them to her cause. They have never lost an occasion to demand their liberties, which are the liberties of the French. They have never asked for self-government, except in order to escape German domination and to avoid war. Now that this war is unchained, they ardently hope for the hour when they will again be part of the Great Republic. The Abbe Wetterle and Mr. George Weil, the Alsatian deputies fled to France at the beginning of the hostilities. They are the true messengers of their fellow citizens. All true Alsace and all true Lorraine would have followed them had this been possible. Do not for one moment doubt that they are not French by Right and by Heart. It is another one of the cynical German lies, that would have us believe the people there, were happy with their lot. Never has Germany been able to win them over. Her oppressive attitude, for forty-four years, is the best proof, and renders any referendum useless.

You, who have the clear sightedness and the uprightness sufficient to establish the truth and to defend it with passion, REMEMBER, IT IS UPON THE SIDE OF FRANCE AND HER ALLIES THAT TRUTH IS TO BE FOUND JUST AS ARE ALSO JUSTICE AND LIBERTY.

To
THE HARVARD CLUB, BOSTON,
February 1, 1916

GENTLEMEN

All humanity is divided into two camps. The causes of this bloody division exceed greatly, the particular interests of those people who are in arms. It amounts to knowing, in the entire world, which is to triumph—Right or Wrong, and, IF THE NATION THAT RESPECTS ITSELF, HAS THE RIGHT TO ASSIST AT WHAT IS GOING ON, IN SILENCE—AND WITH ARMS FOLDED. You are the representatives of American intelligence; solid and serious studies have put you in contact with the past, even as with the present, in the study of universal thought. You are familiar with the great events in history, the uninterrupted wars, which have followed each other through all ages, over eternally the same question—on the one side Liberty, on the other Tyranny. On one side Justice, on the other Iniquity. You are of those, capable of lifting yourselves above all question of time, of placing yourselves outside all frontiers, in order to distribute, according to its merits, blame or praise. You possess the plain facts of the great problem, which is being solved on the Old Continent. You are able to judge by reasoning, not only by instinct. In other words, you are marked out as capable of being the arbitrators, and of directing the *spirit of our neutrality*. The time has come for you to take up your responsibilities, and to render sentence as to which

shall dominate—the *Kultur of Germany*, or *Civilization*.

For this is the way the problem is given to us, and I beg you to consider, under what terms, *Kultur*, has become the unenviable appanage of a race! It is always accompanied by a qualitative adjective, which localizes and restrains it. In other words, *it is German—German Kultur!* On the other hand, *Civilization* has remained a universal ideal. It is neither Russian, nor Italian, nor English, nor French, nor American. *It is simply Humanity!* One is narrow, is part of a System. The other is vast, and corresponds to the aspirations of Nature. There lies the essential distinction, between *Kultur* and *Civilization*. The German *Kultur* represents a recent development. *It is the methodical conglomeration of knowledge directed toward a special end.* CIVILIZATION, IS THE AIM TOWARD WHICH LEADS THE FREE MOVEMENT OF THE SOUL.

These definitions, you will understand, translate themselves in my mind immediately by artistic comparisons. In spite of everything, my calling takes the upper hand, and nobody can prevent me from thinking, that the criterion of a beautiful work, is not in its spontaneity. And again, as far as regards human actions, I feel the same way. These actions are not worthy of admiration, nor of respect, unless one feels that they are not laid down by effort, but that they bear the mark of inspiration. Look at a work of painting, of sculpture, or of architecture. You recognize that it is a master-piece, by the liberty of its conception, and of its execution. If it betrays study, research, labor, it is pretty nearly sure to be mediocre. Well,

everything that comes from Germany betrays all that. That which comes from France, (I choose France to personify, morally, the cause of the Allies) manifests genius. Minds like yours, ought to be sensible to this fundamental difference. There is a question of taste, of personal emotion, which ought to dominate all clear judgment, and, those who place GERMAN VULGARITY above, or on a level with, FRENCH GOOD TASTE, seem to me almost as pitiful, as the fool who prefers a cubist painting to a Fragonard, or who hesitates, between the two.

Prussia, for over a hundred years, has not dreamed of, nor attempted anything less, than to impose her vulgar and brutal methods, first upon the rest of Germany, and then, upon the whole of the world. Drunk by constant success, she has finished by imagining that her task was to regenerate the Universe. Little did it matter to her, if the Universe objected to such treatment. From the height of all her arrogance, she decided that nothing could resist, that nothing *would* resist, that she would re-create the world a second time!

There, where God had worked for seven days, she pretended to do the same, only asking for a slightly longer time.

When one reflects, nothing is more presumptuous, nor more ridiculous than her undertaking. A little intelligence, would have saved her from the disaster to which she is rushing. To hope, by artificial means, to infuse a new life into all Nations, is one of those impossible and impracticable schemes, which if it did not entail, as it does to-day, the horrors of a general conflagration, would merit only laughter and derision. All the

writers, all the men of knowledge, all the artists of Germany, for over a century, have associated themselves and have been the collaborators of this pretentious undertaking. They have furnished a tremendous intellectual effort, to denaturalize, to distort the thought of their fellow citizens, from their infancy up, and to make of each one of them, what is known as a *Super-man*. This is a proper term, invented, (as you know) by one of their masters—Frederick Nietzsche. If they could have contented themselves by making of the Super-man, a product intended for home consumption only, if Kultur was to be limited to their Empire, we would have nothing to say. The most we could regret, would be that people of an amiable nature (such as, for instance, the Badeneese), had allowed themselves, to be won over, to the methods and ways of thinking, of the Prussians and the Bavarians; but, unfortunately, the Super-man rapidly became an article for exportation, and he pretended to dominate the Universe.

I have traveled not a little, and I have had the occasion many times to render account of his misdeeds. To accomplish his “*divine*” mission, he recedes before no crime. By intimidation and by cunningness, he has pretended to fashion all people after his own likeness. It was at that moment that we saw an army of bagmen, fall upon the Globe, some of them carrying their vulgar articles of commerce, others, their no less vulgar theories in regard to art and intellectual pursuits. Commerce, literature, fashion, have been spoiled by their bad taste. France, delicate in herself, could not even escape from the contamination. All over, their *vulgarity* made itself felt. Their theories invaded

the financial world, their blood insinuated itself amongst strangers, through their method of naturalization—one day crawling upon their bellies, and another menacing, they established themselves everywhere, substituting their own image for that of other Nations!

This they were doing very successfully, when they lost patience! Pride, leaning on military force, suggested to them that they could more quickly accomplish their ambitious task by their arms, rather than by their persuasive manners. These scalers, who pretended to the Heavens, let us not deceive ourselves, were really nothing more, than “second story men.” And then the war burst! It had as its object, to accomplish at one fell swoop, that for which they had prepared during forty-four years of peace.

It will be their end, in ruining them, and it may have the happy result of re-conducting them back to their own land, where they may still continue, (if they so see fit), to believe that they are the Gods of the Universe. Yes! There, and perhaps here, because their Walhalla is too cramped, and, where in Heaven’s name can they hope to spread out, after it is all over, and all the gates are shut to them, unless it be in this country, which has not had the courage to throw them out, nor even to blame them openly! *It will then be our lot, to really be the refuge for the scum of the earth.* The indulgence which we show them, indicates to them, that the United States is a refuge which they may hope to conquer, by their methods of *seemingly peaceful invasion*, and from which we are already suffering.

But this, our present state, is nothing in com-

parison to what they have in reserve for us. Their Kultur will find, from one end to the other of our vast territory, a wonderful field—from Canada to Mexico—everywhere their seed will be sown; And yet, up to the present time, we have posed amongst the Champions of Civilization! We used to proclaim with pride, that WE also were the Defenders of Right and Liberty. WE PRETENDED TO PORTRAY, THE GREAT TRADITIONS HANDED DOWN TO US, BY OUR FATHERS, AND WE ADMITTED, AS OUR IDEALS, THE MORAL LAWS FAMILIAR TO INNUMERABLE GENERATIONS. *Are we going to change our point of view?* Are we going to allow ourselves to be fooled by theories, which have not even the virtue of being new, which are, as old as wickedness and ugliness? I trust not! WE CANNOT, WE THE AMERICAN PEOPLE, REMAIN IMPASSIVE, WHEN THE PRINCIPLES UNDER WHICH WE WERE BORN ARE ATTACKED, NOR CAN WE ALLOW OURSELVES LATER, TO BECOME THE SAFE ASYLUM OF THOSE WHO HAVE VIOLATED THEM. As a matter of fact, we have committed the unpardonable offense, of having asked for time to reflect upon our course, but, the more we become conscious of our fault, the greater it is, and there is no help for us excepting in a change of attitude; BECAUSE, IF WE STILL GO ON HESITATING IT IS TO BE FEARED THAT WE MAY TAKE ON THE HABIT OF OUR INDIGNITY. It is this hope, without doubt, upon which our Masters in Washington are nourishing themselves. They hope, for their security, that we will think one day as they

have made us act. The hour approaches, in which we must judge them. This hour must find us, ready to insist that we be allowed, to *act, as we think*. We do not wish to be contaminated by German Kultur, and you, above all others, who are the guardians of our spiritual life, you have the great duty of arising and protesting; believe me, we are not the victims of our imagination, we are not being alarmed by hypothetical danger!

Kultur has no secrets for us. We have had the luck to see it at work, both in times of peace and in times of war; and, we would be without honor, without reason, if we did not declare ourselves its everlasting enemy. It respects nothing and nobody, no more our ideas than our persons. It has ravaged Belgium; it has sunk the Lusitania. No matter to which side we turn, we can find no excuse for our indifference, for our mute complicity. If we place disinterestedness before egoism, *we still have the duty of expressing our indignation, against the German will and purpose to suppress the weaker peoples and to transgress all laws for which we have respect*. If, on the contrary, we place egoism before disinterestedness, THE INSTINCT OF PRESERVATION ORDERS US TO PROTECT OURSELVES AGAINST THOSE WHO MURDER US.

We may search in vain to justify our inertia—the Germanic menace envelops us; it is directed against all our sentiments, the most noble as the most common, and, in refusing to respect the evidence, we condemn ourselves to an insensibility, that means, *to death*. But it is not we who refuse, it is our Government, AND SINCE SUCH IS ITS DESTINY, it will die. From force of habit of

closing its eyes, the day will come, when it will open them no more!

I am convinced that, speaking the way I do, I interpret the intimate thought of the vast majority of my fellow citizens. I would indeed be sorry if it were possible to think otherwise. I have the conviction, that all real Americans, in their inward inwardness, feel an uncomfortable unrest when they open their newspapers in the morning and see the manner in which we are playing at hide and seek, the suppleness with which we get out of the way, and the humiliating ingeniousness with which our Masters use our name, to obtain satisfaction at any price; and to attenuate, by their cleverness of tongue, or by seeming solutions, the aggressive and injurious intentions of Germany.

If indeed the people of America were responsible for the acts of the Government we will have to ask, very shortly, like Germany, why we have so many enemies. The Allies have to be very patient, not to make us responsible for the acts of our Masters. What saves us is the inconceivable nature of their conduct even in their smallest acts. When for example under existing conditions our President, on the Emperor's birthday sends to him his best wishes, France and England before a gesture so naive do not for a moment imagine that we join him.

Think of it, here is a man, the Kaiser, who is responsible for all the crimes against humanity, the crimes against our fellow citizens. Here is a sovereign who has it in his power, by a single word, to put an end to the abominable acts of his admirals and generals, and yet does not pronounce

this word. *It is the Kaiser who sank the Lusitania, and what has our President done to avenge our victims?*

When he becomes again a simple citizen, he will be free to send telegrams of felicitation to all the assassins of the world, but he has not the right to invite the Universe to believe that his signature means ours, nor do we wish that we could be accused of receiving with smile and handshake Mr. Von Bernstorff, who had the cynical presumption of notifying our unhappy citizens that his master had the intention of assassinating them. There is a band known as the Black Hand, which have also the habit of admonishing their victims. When the police put their hands on one of them they cast him into prison until the day that he is judged.

Let us respect the diplomatic immunity and let us insist that Mr. Von Bernstorff relieve us of his undesirable presence.

And yet I am full well aware that after the affair of the Lusitania we carried off a diplomatic victory. We sent a note and we received one in return and then the Arabic was torpedoed, amongst others, and then the Ancona!

After that we sent another note and we carried off another diplomatic victory. This, if you will remember was on New Year's Day and was evidently intended as a present to the United States; but on the afternoon of the next day, the Persia was blown up! The Turks, by Jove!! The Teutonic empires are making fools of us! This is only too clear, and they employ, to justify themselves, arguments which cover us with ridicule and which we accept. For instance, if, in the case of the Lusitania our citizens found Death, it was

because the Lusitania sank too quickly, and in the case of the Ancona, it was because the crew behaved so badly. I wish to take up this last allegation. It bears the mark of a too shameful cynicism. I have been in Italy and I have seen the magnificence of the Italians who are fighting. They carry with them in the struggle of the conflict all the ardor and force which is one of the characteristics of their race. Knowing them as I do I do not hesitate to say, that the insinuation is an indecent lie, which the Austrians have used to excuse their crime. Rest assured that the crew of the Ancona never swerved for a single instant from the idealism of its duty, and that Austria has invented out of whole cloth the miserable insinuation. We ought to blush to allow ourselves to be thus treated as fools. To the actual crime they do not hesitate to offer us moral insult. In all truth it is marvelous to see the subtleness and the ingenuity displayed by our Masters to remain under any conditions on good terms with the Central Empires.

A few days ago at Washington, a Senator said that Americans should not have the right to embark on ships belonging to the belligerents, that in so doing they acted as bad citizens, that they were endeavoring to embarrass their own country. It is incomprehensible to understand how such language can be uttered by the mouth of one who is credited to understand the laws. All international conventions, are supposed to protect the existence of all passengers, no matter on what ship they are traveling or of what country they are citizens. Are we going to bear ourselves sufficiently low, to Germany, to acknowledge her pre-

tensions, in encouraging tacitly her liberty to kill any civilians that she wishes to, except Americans? And again, then what guarantee have we that they will not attack neutral flags? The law which places them in safety is no more solid than the one violated. It is either the whole law we should stand by, or else no law holds good. Instead of getting satisfaction, shall we be forced to offer it?

The Government amuses itself with consultations, when the hour of action has sounded a long time back! One may almost say that they are prolonging the agony over the submarine question, out of a sort of gratitude, because they remember, without doubt, that this quarrel has diverted attention, happily for it, from the Mexican question which was babied along by Mr. Taft to hand to Mr. Wilson, who, in turn, is babying it along to hand to heaven knows who; but, let us hope to someone with the energy and intelligence to solve it. Strange as it may seem, the administration, up to the present moment has, thanks to the war, been able to keep alive. However, sooner or later, it will be the death of it.

I ask you all, if it has not come over you more than once, in the last eighteen months, to have felt wounded in your self-respect and in your modesty. What has come over us? Who has thus the right to make us hang our heads? We know that we are in the wrong; or, at least—through the attitude of our Government—that we have the appearance of a people who are deceiving their conscience. **GERMANY IS OUR ENEMY, AS SHE IS THE ENEMY OF ALL FREE PEOPLE.** We have nothing in common with those

who base their grandeur upon pillage, and upon terror, with those who—taking the name of liberty in vain—have annexed by violence Alsace, Lorraine, Slesvig-Holstein, Bosnia, Herzegovinia, Triest and the Trent, with those who have cowardly invaded glorious Belgium, and are now strangling gallant little Serbia. THE SMALL NATIONS IN THE WORLD, REPRESENT A GREAT PRINCIPLE, FOR, WITHOUT WEAKNESS, JUSTICE WOULD NOT EXIST, AND LIBERTY, WOULD DISAPPEAR, IF IT WERE NO LONGER NECESSARY TO PROTECT IT. Therefore, do not let us astonish ourselves, if German Kultur ends by the suppression of all nations without defense. But we, in the very name of the Monroe Doctrine, *we claim their right to existence*; not only in this manner, do we claim it, but in the name of all *international law which we have admitted*. My sixteen months stay in France permits me to say, without fear of being contradicted, that the Germans have considered these international laws, *all of them*, as “mere scraps of paper.” Where, therefore, do they find the impudence to-day, of exciting themselves, and ourselves, against the attitude of England, to inspire in our journals, through the intermediary of our administration, articles which attack the acts of Great Britain. They should have the modesty to keep quiet; and we, also, in our not protesting against the acts of Germany, we have lost the right to school whoever it may be, and we are no longer qualified, *even to discuss the legitimacy of reprisals*, should any of the Allies see fit no longer to respect international treaties and conventions.

England, at this moment, should be an example for us. A nation of sailors, the English have, in an incredibly short time, realized and perfected themselves as a nation of soldiers. We, who are always speaking of preparation, let us hope that we will do as well, when the moment comes, that we have the courage to take a decision. For the moment they do not ask so much of us. ALL I ASK, AND ALL THE ALLIES ASK, IS NO DIRECT PARTICIPATION IN THE WAR; BUT, THE OFFICIAL DECLARATION THAT WILL SHOW TO THE WORLD OUR MORAL ATTITUDE! Are you of the opinion that the actual government interprets, by its ambiguous manifestations, the sentiments of the United States? No. Are you of the opinion then that we are practicing obedience to the Government's wishes in an intelligent fashion? There are indeed three ways of a people understanding obedience, as exemplified by the belligerents and ourselves. THAT OF THE ALLIES WHERE THE OFFICERS LEAD MEN, THAT OF THE TEUTONS, WHERE THE OFFICERS DRIVE THE MEN, AND OF OURSELVES—A FLOCK OF MUTTONS FOLLOWING THE SHEPHERD. LET US BE VERY WARY OF HOW WE LEAN TO THIS LAST METHOD, WHICH LEADS TO ALL KINDS OF MISERABLE COMPROMISE, AND ALL KINDS OF ABDICATION.



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